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Salisbury Police Department to purchase body cameras

SALISBURY, N.C. (Dec. 2, 2015) – The Salisbury City Council has authorized the Salisbury Police Department to purchase 60 VISTA™ High-Definition Chest Mount body cameras during the regular City Council meeting held Tuesday, Dec. 1.

The VISTA™ police body-worn cameras by WatchGuard will offer non-manipulatable, audio and video footage of encounters between police officers and Salisbury citizens, and integrate with the department's current in-car video system on the same server. The server, which stores the captured data, also cannot be manipulated.

One benefit of the new cameras is the ability to capture “after-the-fact” recordings in cases where the recording device was not activated during an event. According to WatchGuard, “the background, recorded video is continuously looped to the hard drive.” Supervisors then only “enter a start and stop point to create a new event from background video. The new event will be automatically uploaded or burned to DVD and managed just like normal triggered events.”

“The cameras will provide a great benefit for those instances in which a citizen complaint is filed, as well as allow the police department’s supervisory personnel to hear and see what occurred in the incident,” said Salisbury Police Chief Rory Collins. “The cameras provide a significant benefit if a case were to reach a courtroom setting, as all parties involved are able to see what occurred and hear what was said, both by the officer and the citizen(s) involved. We feel these cameras will assist with building trust between the police and the citizens we serve. ”

Forty-four patrol officers, 10 street crimes officers and three school resource officers will wear the cameras, while the three remaining cameras will be assigned to other staff on an as-needed basis or will serve as spare cameras if needed for backup.

Slightly more than half of the \$64,940 purchase cost for the cameras will be taken from the police department’s Asset Forfeiture funds available, while the other half was garnered from private donations from local business leaders and citizens.

The City of Salisbury, America’s first 10-gigabit city, is located in the heart of the Piedmont region of North Carolina, midway between Charlotte and Greensboro. Salisbury is the county seat of Rowan County, and provides a full range of municipal services, including law enforcement, fire protection, zoning and code enforcement and water and sewer systems. For more information regarding the City of Salisbury and its services and departments, please visit us on the web at www.salisburync.gov. To receive updates regarding local initiatives, meetings, programs and events, please follow us on Twitter at @CitySalisburyNC and Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/CitySalisburyNC>.

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